

Serial No. 10/655,099
60137-145; 115-3646-U

REMARKS

Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for the detailed remarks. Claims 1 and 3 have been amended and claims 2 and 8-13 have been canceled. New claims 14-36 are presented. Accordingly, claims 1, 3-7 and 14-36 are pending.

Claims 1-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by *Sauter* (5465749.) Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. *Sauter* fails to disclose or suggest a top plate engageable with a groove proximate a top portion of the valve assembly as recited in amended claim 1. The claims are properly allowable. The Examiner suggests that a groove is "design choice." Under MPEP § 2112, however, the Examiner is required to present evidence in fact and/or technical reasoning to reasonably support the determination that the allegedly inherent characteristic necessarily flows from the teachings of the prior art. Applicant requests that the Examiner provide such evidence or the rejection be dropped.

New claims 14-36 recite further features of the present invention which are neither disclosed nor suggested by the cited references and are thus properly allowable.

The amendments made to the specification and drawings are not connected in any way to any rejection in this application and are not new matter as the addition drawings only provide illustrations of that which has already been disclosed.

Please charge \$650 to Deposit Account No. 50-1482, in the name of Carlson, Gaskey & Olds, for 9 claims in excess of 20 and 1 additional independent claim. If any additional fees or extensions of time are required, please charge to Deposit Account No. 50-1482.

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Applicant respectfully submits that this case is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that a teleconference will facilitate moving this case forward to being issued, Applicant's representative can be contacted at the number indicated below.

Respectfully Submitted,

CARLSON, GASKEY & OLDS, P.C.

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